

Application No. 10/604,531
Docket No. H-205829-div
Amendment dated April 14, 2006
Reply to Office Action of February 14, 2006

REMARKS

In the Office Action, the Examiner reviewed claims 1-20 of the above-identified US Patent Application, with the result that claims 10-20 were allowed, claims 1 and 8-10 were rejected under 35 USC §102, and claims 2-7 (which depend from claim 1) were deemed to recite allowable subject matter.¹ In response, Applicants have amended the claims as set forth above. More particularly:

Independent claim 1 has been reverted to its wording as examined in the preceding Office Action dated September 1, 2005 (Paper No. 082005), except for the inclusion of all limitations of its dependent claim 2, which was deemed to recite allowable subject matter in the preceding Office Action. As such, independent claim 1 as now amended is identical in scope to claim 2 when deemed to recite allowable subject matter in the preceding Office Action.

In view of its limitations being incorporated into claim 1, claim 2 has been canceled without prejudice.

Dependent claim 8 has also been reverted to its wording as examined

¹ Independent claim 10 is identified as both allowed and rejected on the Office Action Summary page, as rejected in paragraphs 2 and 3 of the Office Action, and as allowed in paragraph 5 of the Office Action. In view of the Examiner's explanation in paragraph 5 for allowing claim 10, Applicants' presume that statements made in the Office Action regarding the rejection of claim 10 were mistakes.

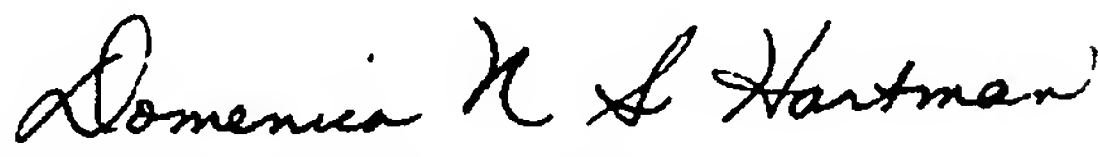
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in the preceding Office Action.

Applicants believe that the above amendments do not present new matter. Instead, the amendments are strictly limited to amending independent claim 1 to incorporate limitations cited by the Examiner as being the allowable subject matter recited in its dependent claim 2. Applicants believe that the amendments to the claims strictly comply with the Examiner's determination in the previous Office Action that independent claim 1 would be allowable if amended to incorporate all limitations of claim 2. Accordingly, Applicants respectfully request withdrawal of the rejection under 35 USC §102.

Should the Examiner have any questions with respect to any matter now of record, Applicants' representative may be reached at (219) 462-4999.

Respectfully submitted,

By 
Domenica N.S. Hartman
Reg. No. 32,701

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Hartman & Hartman, P.C.
Valparaiso, Indiana 46383
TEL.: (219) 462-4999
FAX: (219) 464-1166